



Written testimony submitted to the Education Committee on S.B. 948, An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut

March 3, 2021

Co-Chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Sanchez, Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

I am the Rev. Cass L. Shaw. I serve on the Board of FaithActs for Education, and also as the President & CEO of The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport (1718 Capitol Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604), which is made up of over 70 congregations in the Greater Bridgeport area. I have submitted personal written testimony to this committee, but here I submit my testimony as a representative of The Council of Churches and our member congregations.

I'm asking you to support S.B. 948, An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut. The Council of Churches has been supporting at-risk youth for over 40 years through our Janus Center, which keeps youth in school and out of the juvenile justice system. We work with 90 students every week, and touch the lives of nearly 400 youth every year. We believe S.B. 948 is critical, and urge you to support its passage. We see first hand the effects of underfunded schools on the youth we serve, and it is long past time for Connecticut to care about our urban, Black, Brown and low-income students as much as we do our white, suburban students. For our state to prosper, ALL children must receive a great education.

Our member churches are in Westport and Southport, Stratford and Easton, Fairfield and Milford, as well as Bridgeport. We are people of faith who know that EVERY child is created in God's image and deserves to be treated with fairness and respect. It is essential that our state's education funding system be reformed so that urban children have the same advantages, resources, and opportunities as their suburban counterparts.

I urge you to vote "Yes" on S.B. 948 and support its passage in the General Assembly so that all of our children get the education they deserve. Thank you, The Rev. Cass L. Shaw

Please vote "Yes" on S.B. 948 and support its passage in the General Assembly so that our state's budget reflects the values of justice and equity in education.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and leadership on this issue.

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